



CITY OF CLEVELAND
Mayor Justin M. Bibb

Request for Proposal

For the Operations, Management,
and Revitalization of

HIGHLAND PARK GOLF COURSE

September 2022
City of Cleveland
601 Lakeside Avenue
Cleveland, Ohio 44114

September 15, 2022

Dear Consultants:

The City of Cleveland (“City”), through its Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects, is currently soliciting Request for Proposals (“RFP”) for a consultant (“Consultant” or “Consultants”) to enter into a Qualified Management Agreement (as described in IRS Revenue Procedure 2017-13) to operate, manage, and revitalize the 36-hole Highland Park Golf Course and its surrounding landscape located at 3550 Green Road in Highland Hills, Ohio.

A site visit and tour of Highland Park Golf Course will be on **Thursday, October 6, 2022 at 11:30am EST**. Prospective Consultants are encouraged to participate although attendance is not mandatory.

Consultants wishing to be considered in the selection process must submit an electronic copy of their proposal **no later than 5:00 pm EST, Monday, October 20, 2022**. No proposals will be accepted after that date and time unless the City extends the deadline by a written addendum.

Electronic copies may be submitted to Acting Commissioner of Real Estate for the Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects Susanne DeGennaro (“Commissioner”) sdegennaro@clevelandohio.gov with the subject line “Proposal for Revitalization Plan for Highland Park Golf Course.”

The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals or portions of them, to waive irregularities, informalities, and technicalities, to re-issue or to proceed to obtain the service(s) desired otherwise, at any time or in any manner considered in the City’s best interests. The City may modify or amend any provision of this notice or the RFP.

Should you have any questions regarding this solicitation, please contact Acting Commissioner Susanne DeGennaro at 216.664.2371 or sdegennaro@clevelandohio.gov.

Sincerely,

Susanne DeGennaro
Acting Commissioner of Real Estate
Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects
City of Cleveland

CC: Bradford Davy, Chief Strategy Officer
Bonnie Teeuwen, Chief Operating Officer
Jeff Epstein, Chief Integrated Development Officer
Ahmed Abonamah, Chief Financial Officer
Frank D. Williams, Director of the Department of Public Works
James DeRosa, Director of Mayor’s Office of Capital Projects

Overview

The City is requesting proposals from qualified organizations or individuals for the operations, management, and revitalization of Highland Park Golf Course (“Property” or “Highland Park”) located at 3550 Green Road, Highland Hills, Ohio 44122. Highland Park is currently a 36-hole golf course and clubhouse owned and operated by the City with landscape maintenance handled by a third-party vendor. If this RFP is awarded, operations of the Property shall be pursuant to a Qualified Management Agreement (as described in IRS Revenue Procedure 2017-13) to be negotiated with the City and subject to separate authorization from Cleveland City Council.

Vision

The City’s vision for Highland Park is for it to become a best-in-class golf course which celebrates its legacy as a course frequented by African American golfers on Cleveland’s east side. The City aspires to establish this as a tournament-ready course that is also a frontrunner in community impact and sustainability. The City aims for the course to continue its history of promoting diversity in golf by opening doors to the sport for new, young golfers from Cleveland and by honoring its past as a predominantly minority course. As Highland Park nears its centennial birthday (2028), this is an opportunity to elevate it as a premier public course for locals and as a destination for golfers from across the country. As such, the City is seeking innovative ideas to re-imagine the golf course for the next 100 years.

History

Course History and Legacy as a Minority Course

Highland Park opened in 1928. It is the only public golf course near the City’s east-side wards and has historically been a welcoming golf course for minority players in an overwhelmingly white sport. The Sixth City Golf Club (established in 1946) and Forest City Golf Club were two pioneering African American golf leagues which played primarily at Highland Park. The Sixth City Club’s annual Cleveland Holiday Open tournament, which began in the 1940s, drew big names such as Charles Sifford, Lee Elder, Charles Owens, Jim and Chuck Thorpe, Orville Moody, Gibby Gilbert, Nate Starks, Joe Louis, Jackie Robinson, Dick (Night Train) Lane, and Cazzie Russell over the years.

During the PGA Tour’s Cleveland Open in 1964 and 1965, the course saw golf greats like Arnold Palmer, Jack Nicklaus, and Tony Lema. This was the first professional tournament to offer a \$100,000 purse. Highland Park also hosted the inaugural PGA Minority Collegiate Golf Championship in 1987, at which African American golf stars such as Lee Elder, Charlie Sifford, Calvin Peete, Jim Dent, and Renee Powell held free golf clinics for the community. Sifford, the “Jackie Robinson of golf” and first black golfer to play and win on the PGA tour, claimed it as his home course for a time. See Exhibits 6-8 for additional course history and historic images. It is essential that the Consultant respects and pays homage to this historical significance.

Recent Investment, Management, and Operations History

In 2011, the City secured an external management company to manage all aspects of the course’s management and operations. The City replaced the roof for \$144,930 in 2013. Between 2015 and 2020, the City invested \$300,000 to update the irrigation system on both courses, which are now wirelessly connected to a central terminal in the clubhouse. In partnership with the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District (NEORS), the City also recently invested \$150,000 in a new bridge at the first hole at the Mill Creek Crossing, part of a 2017 \$1.7 million stream restoration project completed by NEORS. These investments were aided, in part, from the issuance of tax-exempt municipal bonds. In 2018, the City began directly managing the administration, sales, and concession activities

of the golf course. Additionally, in 2018 and renewed until May 2023, the City solicited and entered into a contract with a landscape maintenance provider to maintain the golf course landscape.

Property

Course

363-acre golf course that features two (2) eighteen-hole courses. The 18-hole "Blue" course provides 6,740 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 71 . The 18-hole "Red" course features 6,322 yards of golf from the longest tees for a par of 71 . The course rating is 69.7 and it has a slope rating of 113.

Clubhouse

The course is highlighted by a 11,430 sq. ft. clubhouse which includes areas for a manager's office, pro-shop, restaurant and second-floor banquet room.

Parking

The property's two (2) parking lots can accommodate over 150 cars and are conveniently located near the clubhouse near the intersection of Green Rd. and Chagrin Blvd.

Miscellaneous Equipment

- Vulcan stove – oven and stove top work, overhead warmer non-operational
- Vulcan griddle – griddle works, overhead warmer non-operational
- Frymaster - Model SR 14ESD
- U-Star freezer (single door) - Serial Number – 6036 1708 1903 1602
- Victory – double door refrigerator-non-operational, Serial Number – B 9503V227
- Scotsman ice machine – Serial Number 18011320011210
- Vulcan three door cooler, Serial Number 1317579
- Hobart dishwasher – non-operational, Serial Number 27-1027-602
- U – Star two door cooler
- Toro Reelmaster 6700 D fairway mower - 103X 69 – non operational
- Toro Triplex Greenmaster mower - working

Local Context

Location and Demographics

Highland Park is located in Highland Hills, Ohio. Highland Hills is a village of 764 residents and is one of the City's inner-ring suburbs. Based on 2020 U.S. Census information, 86% of its population is African American and around 5% is Hispanic. The median age is 34.5. Highland Hills is situated near the City's southeastern-most neighborhood and is adjacent to the suburbs of Shaker Heights, Beachwood, and Warrensville Heights.

Access and Transportation

Highland Park Golf Course is a 25-minute drive from downtown Cleveland, a 15-minute drive from Cleveland's eastern neighborhoods of Shaker Square and Larchmere, and a 5-minute drive from Cleveland's southeastern most neighborhoods of Lee-Harvard and Lee-Seville. It is conveniently located near interstate 271 at the intersection of Chagrin Boulevard and Lee Road, two major roads in the Greater Cleveland area.

- **Chagrin Boulevard (U.S. Route 422):** Chagrin Boulevard connects the City to several east-side Cleveland suburbs. It begins in the City's central neighborhoods as Kinsman Road, turning into Chagrin Boulevard when it reaches Shaker Heights, and continues all the way to Pennsylvania.
- **Green Road:** Green Road is a major artery through the eastern suburbs of Cleveland, starting at Euclid Avenue on the City's east side and stretching southeast to the intersection of Interstates 271 and 480.
- **Interstate 271:** Highland Park is a 5-minute drive from Interstate 271, the outer-belt east freeway extending between Akron and Cleveland. Interstate 271 begins at an interchange with Interstate 71 in Medina and ends at an interchange with Interstate 90 in Willoughby Hills, with an interchange with Interstate 480 near Highland Park.
- **Public Transportation:** The Greater Cleveland Regional Transit Authority (RTA) 14-14A bus line provides service from downtown Cleveland and through the Chagrin-Green intersection. The RTA 15 bus line also runs between downtown Cleveland and the course's south side (Harvard Road). Additionally, the RTA's Blue/Green rapid train line, which begins in downtown Cleveland, ends at the Van Aken District approximately one mile from the course.

Nearby Amenities

- **[Van Aken District](#)** (5-minute drive): This vibrant Shaker Heights mixed-use development contains several local retail and dining options within and surrounding a lively market hall. It hosts a farmers' market and regular events and entertainment for visitors.
- **[Pinecrest](#)** (8-minute drive): This multi-use development the east side of Greater Cleveland contains premier restaurant, retail, and fitness establishments, as well as a hotel, apartments, and movie theater.
- **[Legacy Village](#)** (10-minute drive): This lifestyle center boasts upscale options for shopping and dining as well as hotel accommodations for visitors. Legacy Village hosts a farmers' market and regular events, such as live music.

Project Details

Requirements

The selected Consultant is expected to operate, manage, and revitalize Highland Park and its associated amenities as a best-in-class, tournament-ready facility that celebrates its legacy as a minority golf course, promotes diversity in the sport of golf, and embraces sustainability. The City is also willing to consider proposals which retain fewer (less than 36) holes of golf and/or repurpose a portion of the golf course.

This should be mutually beneficial relationship for both the chosen Consultant and the City. The City expects the Consultant to utilize the assets that it has at Highland Park, invest in their improvement, and develop a business model that allows all parties to benefit. The City will retain ownership of the property. The City is open to various business models that can achieve the goals set forth in this RFP but expects the Consultant to maintain Highland Park as a self-sustaining facility.

Qualified Management Agreement

Any agreement for the operation, management, and revitalization of Highland Park resulting from this RFP shall be a qualified management agreement, as fully described in IRS Revenue Procedure 2017-13.¹ Such an agreement will preserve the tax-exempt status of the City's outstanding tax-exempt bonds used to finance improvements at Highland Park, and will preserve the ability of the Contractor (through the City) to finance future improvements at Highland Park with tax-exempt bonds. In addition, it is the City's intent to preserve Highland Park's exemption from local real property taxation by maintaining the golf course's status as public property used exclusively for a public purpose.²

Timeline and Term of Agreement

The project is to be completed expeditiously, and the City expects the Consultant to begin operating, managing, and revitalizing Highland Park during the Spring of 2023. The term of the qualified management agreement between the City and the Consultant, including renewal options, can be no greater than 30 years.

Selection Criteria and Process

Criteria

Initially, proposals will be evaluated based on their relative responsiveness to the criteria described below and will be scored based on the point values as shown:

1. Best-in-Class Facility: 50 points

- **Course Plan**

The Consultant should provide a best-in-class, tournament-ready course plan.

- **Amenities Plan**

The Consultant should provide a top-rate amenities plan, such as improvements and expansion of the clubhouse facilities (concessions, restaurant, community space, etc.) and surrounding amenities (parking, etc.). This may include the addition of a driving range or other relevant facilities.

2. Community Impact: 40 points

A. Community Engagement

The Consultant should provide a plan for community engagement and benefits, to identify and implement benefits based on the desires of those who currently utilize the golf course and are stakeholders in nearby Cleveland neighborhoods.

B. Diversity in Golf

- **Maintaining and Expanding Minority Access to Golf**

The Consultant should provide a plan to maintain and expand diversity in and minority access to golf at Highland Park (e.g. First Tee programming, allowing majority minority schools access as a home golf course, hosting minority tournaments such as the PGA WORKS Collegiate Championship, etc.).

¹ <https://www.irs.gov/tax-exempt-bonds/private-business-use-management-contracts>

² <https://www.supremecourt.ohio.gov/ROD/docs/pdf/0/2015/2015-Ohio-1775.pdf>

- **Celebrating the Golf Course’s Heritage**

The Consultant should provide a plan to commemorate the history of Highland Park as a traditionally minority golf course and as a home course of golf legend Charlie Sifford.

C. Resident and Local Access

The Consultant should provide a plan for reserving special access (e.g. special hours, reduced and accessible green fees, free golf for under 18, discounted community access to the clubhouse facilities, etc.) to residents of Cleveland, particularly for those of low socio-economic status.

D. Equity in Opportunity

- **Employees and Interns**

The Proposer should provide a plan for employing local youths in internships and other professional development opportunities centered around the game of golf or hospitality, as well as employing local Cleveland-area and minority residents in key leadership positions, in the selection of a vendor.

- **Sub-Consultants**

The Consultant should provide a plan for the proposed use of City-certified Minority Business Enterprise (MBE), Female Business Enterprise (FBE) and/or Cleveland Small Business (CSB) firms in subcontracting and Cleveland residents in employment on-site. The proposal should clearly indicate how the Consultant will incorporate Cleveland residents and MBE, FBE and CSB firms into the project.

3. Sustainability: 10 points

The Consultant should provide a plan for the thoughtful and innovative optimization of environmental benefits and conservation of the natural environment and minimization of environmental harm (e.g. pursuit of Certified Audubon Cooperative Sanctuary designation, collaboration with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency and the Northeast Ohio Regional Sewer District for water quality management, use of organic fertilizers, etc.).

Process

Tentative Timeline

The City anticipates it will - but neither promises nor is obligated to - process proposals received according to the following schedule:

Advertise Request for Proposals	September 15, 2022
Site Visit	October 6, 2022, 11:30am EST
Deadline for Submitting Questions	October 11, 2022, 5:00pm EST
Deadline for Submitting Proposals	October 20, 2022, 5:00pm EST
Selection of Finalists	Week of October 24, 2022
Presentations	Week of November 7, 2022
Review Financial package	Week of November 14, 2022
Selection of Vendor	Late November, 2022

Site Visit

All who respond to this RFP are strongly encouraged, but not required to, to visit Highland Park during the scheduled site visit and tour on Thursday, October 6 at 11:30am EST. Interested parties should RSVP with names and email addresses to Transformative Projects Specialist Abby Poeske via email at apoeske@clevelandohio.gov. RSVPs are required.

Questions and Communications

All communications will be formalized. Questions may be submitted to Acting Commissioner Susanne DeGennaro at 216.664.2371 or sdegennaro@clevelandohio.gov and will be accepted until 5:00pm EST on October 11, 2022. All questions and answers will be shared with prospective Consultants.

Evaluation of Proposals

The City will evaluate all responsive proposals based upon the information and materials contained in the proposals as submitted. It will then evaluate and score all responsive proposals, based on the evaluation criteria herein. The highest-scored proposals shall then be deemed finalists; if necessary, the City reserves the right to expand the number of finalists in the event of ties.

Finalist Presentations

The City intends to select a limited number of Consultants to make a final presentation of their qualifications, proposed services, and capabilities. The City will notify the Consultants selected for presentations in writing. The presentation will not discuss pricing.

Proposal Guidance

Submission Requirements

All proposals shall contain concise written material and illustrations. Legibility, clarity, and completeness are essential.

Each proposal should reflect the City's goal to have a Consultant who provides a high level of service to the public while managing the Property and who provides related activities in a fiscally responsible manner that preserves and improves the Property as a resource for the benefit of the City.

Each Consultant, in preparing their proposal, should consider all applicable laws and available industry guidelines as applicable to open space, liability considerations, site development permits, public health standards, recreational operations, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) access, the Property's tax-exempt status, and the highest standards of maintenance of all facilities and equipment.

The response to the RFP, at a minimum, should include:

1. Executive Summary

The Consultant should include a brief introduction to the organization and an expression of interest in the operation and management of this Property.

2. Identity of Leadership and Key Personnel

The Consultant should include the complete identity, including Social Security number, address, daytime phone number, and current employment of the Consultant; or the name of the organization, the organization's Federal Tax ID number and the names and addresses of the principals who will be responsible for the operation of the business and their position in the firm. If the business is a privately-held corporation, a listing of all stockholders, their interest in the company as related to percentage of ownership, and their interest, if any, in the operations of the entity must be included.

The Consultant should also submit an organizational chart and demographics of the organization's leadership and key project personnel; Consultants may include project personnel names, roles, and unique benefits the team brings to this project.

3. Plan for Revitalization, Community Impact, Financing, and Sustainability

The Consultant should include a conceptual plan for revitalization, community impact, financing, and sustainability, as well as a tentative schedule for these plans.

The City will select the Consultant that best demonstrates that it would add the most value toward achieving the key objectives of operating, managing, and revitalizing Highland Park. The selection criteria the City will use to evaluate these plans are enumerated above. The submissions by Consultants should be responsive to this specific range of issues. Consultants are asked to read this RFP carefully to ensure that it addresses the specific requirements outlined.

4. Proposed Terms

The Consultant should include the terms that will provide for a Qualified Management Agreement being achieved.

5. Financial Information

The Consultant should include a financing plan and conceptual sources and uses. Consultants should also demonstrate their ability to secure financing for projects of this scale and complexity and provide examples of prior success financing similar improvements.

The City reserves the right to require Consultants to show to the complete satisfaction of the City staff that it has the necessary facilities, abilities and financial resources to provide the services specified. The Consultant may also be required to give a past history in order to satisfy the City in regard to the Consultant's qualifications. The City may make a reasonable investigation deemed necessary and proper to determine the ability of the Consultant to perform the work, and the Consultant shall furnish the City all information for this purpose that may be requested.

The Consultant must demonstrate the financial capability to operate and maintain the golf course properly and make needed improvements. The City will perform a financial analysis of the firm that received the highest rating from the evaluation committee; as part of such analysis the City may request additional financial information, including audited financial statements (if any) from the Consultant. The Consultant will be eliminated from the process if the analysis shows the firm is financially unable to perform the contract as proposed. In this situation, the City will proceed to the next highest rated Consultant until a financially responsible Consultant is discovered.

6. Project Partners

The Consultant should describe partnerships they might establish to execute or elevate their work. They should enumerate the state of the existing relationship (e.g. working together on x for y years) and how the partnership would allow for the goals to be met.

7. Relevant Project Experience

The Consultant should provide up to five (5) examples of recently completed projects that demonstrate experience in executing projects of this scale and complexity, commitment to equity, sustainability, and community impact.

8. References

The Consultant should provide three (3) verifiable positive references from non-affiliated entities or individuals which may include but are not limited to ability, performance of previous contracts and service, integrity, character, reputation, judgment, experience, efficiency, delivery and professionalism.

9. Affidavit:

The Consultant should submit with its proposal an affidavit stating that neither it nor its agents, nor any other party acting for it has paid or agreed to pay, directly or indirectly, any person, firm or corporation any money or valuable consideration for assistance in procuring or attempting to procure the contract proposed to result from its proposal, and further agreeing that no such money or reward will be paid.

10. Fee Schedule (submitted as separate file saved as "Firm Name_FEE SCHEDULE") The fee schedule will be reviewed based on the attractiveness of and demonstrated ability to achieve the revenue projections for the proposed term of the agreement and the likelihood of maximizing investments in the property. The Consultant should include the following:

- A. Pro forma
- B. Plan for capital investment in the property and/or potential revenue share, or alternative model
- C. Proposed revenue sharing and management fee agreement, as well as a timeline that includes a detailed breakeven analysis setting forth the point at which the Proposer will generate enough income to cover its expenses and begin generating an income.
- D. Proposed length of agreement.

Additional Information and Requirements

1. To assure that all modifications, notices and addenda are received, all interested firms are required to notify Abby Poeske, in writing (via e-mail to apoeske@clevelandohio.gov) of their interest in the project. Said modifications, notices and addenda will be issued to those firms that have made their interest known. Firms that fail to confirm their interest risk not receiving important information regarding the project. The City will require the selected Consultant Team to abide by this RFP and any subsequent modifications, notices and addenda.
2. By submission of a proposal, the Consultant acknowledges that it is aware of and understands all requirements, provisions, and conditions in and of this RFP and that its failure to become familiar with all the requirements, provisions, conditions, and information either in this RFP or disseminated either at a pre-proposal conference or by addendum issued prior to the proposal submission deadline, and all circumstances and conditions affecting performance of the services to be rendered by the successful Consultant will not relieve it from responsibility for all parts of its Proposal and, if selected for contract, its complete performance of the contract in compliance with its terms. The Consultant acknowledges that the City has no responsibility for any conclusions or interpretations made by the Consultant on the basis of information made available by the City. The City does not guarantee the accuracy of any information provided and the Consultant expressly waives any right to a claim against the City arising from or based upon any incorrect, inaccurate, or incomplete information or information not otherwise conforming to represented or actual conditions.
3. The City will not be responsible for any costs, expense or burden incurred by Consultants in the preparation and submission of proposals.
4. Proposals submitted are not made publicly available until the contract has been awarded by the City. All proposals and supporting materials as well as correspondence relating to this RFP become property of the City when received. Any proprietary information contained in the proposal should be so indicated. However, a general indication that the entire contents, or a major portion, of the proposal is proprietary will not be honored.
5. No organization, firms, or individuals seeking award of a contract under this solicitation may initiate or continue any verbal or written communications regarding the solicitation with any City officer, elected official, employee, or other City representative. Violations will be reviewed by the Commissioner of Purchases & Supplies. If determined that such communication has compromised the competitive process, the offer submitted by the organization, firm, or individual may be disqualified from consideration for award.
6. The City reserves the right to reject any or all proposals, in whole or in part, to request clarifications, to negotiate changes in the scope of services, and to waive any technicalities as deemed in its best interest.
7. One (1) electronic file of your proposal should be submitted. Proposals must be signed by a company official who has authorization to commit company resources *or* include a separate letter of support from the official with authorization to commit company resources.

8. Proposals shall be emailed to Acting Commissioner Susanne DeGennaro at sdegennaro@clevelandohio.gov with the subject line "Proposal for Revitalization Plan for Highland Park Golf Course."
9. Questions and requests for information should be directed to Acting Commissioner Susanne DeGennaro at 216-664-2371 or sdegennaro@clevelandohio.gov.

Exhibits

This RFP includes the following exhibits:

1. Map of site
2. Map of surrounding neighborhoods
3. Satellite image of site
4. Interior and exterior photographs depicting the existing conditions of the building and site
5. 2019 proposal for site development of the golf course
6. Summary of the golf course history
7. 1930s lithograph by H.C. Summersett
8. Competitors in the 1936 Forest City Golf Tournament at Highland Park

Exhibit 1



Exhibit 2

Request for Proposals
Highland Park Golf Course
September 2022

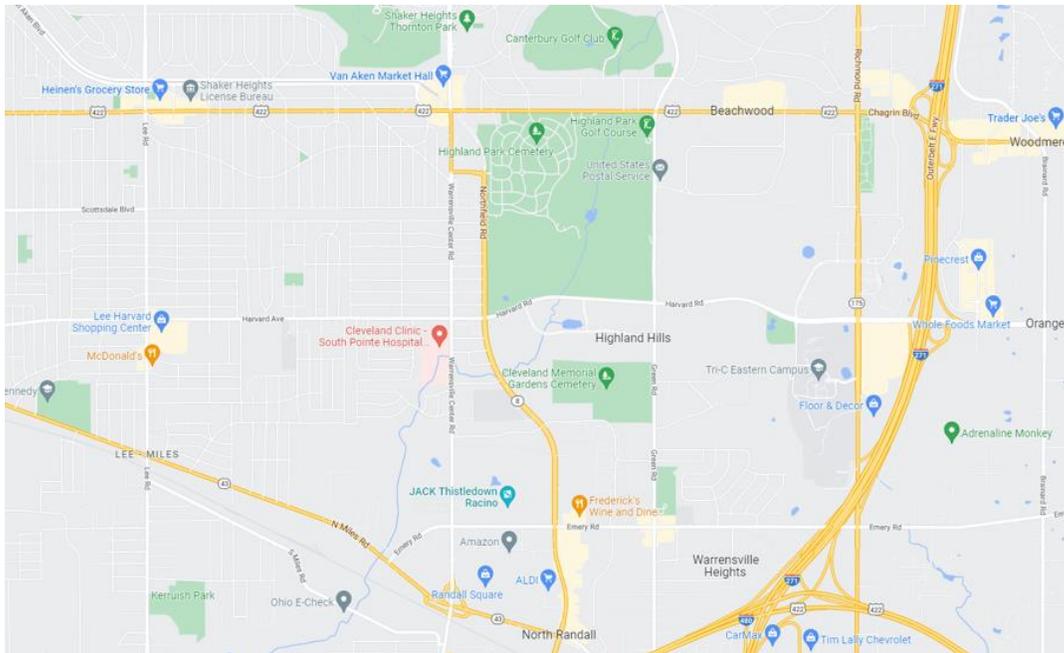


Exhibit 3



Exhibit 4

Request for Proposals
Highland Park Golf Course
September 2022



Exhibit 5

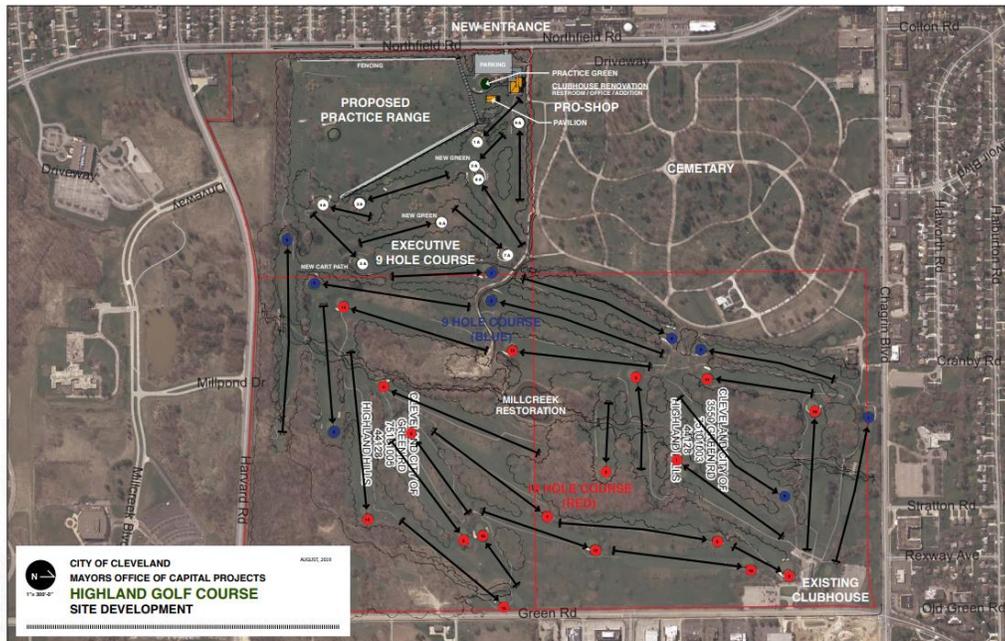


Exhibit 6

Highland Park Golf Course History

The Highland Park Golf Course opened in 1928 in suburban Highland Hills. It is the only public course near Cleveland's East Side wards and has historically been one of the most welcoming courses for minority players. Its legacy goes back decades to when it hosted PGA Tour's Cleveland Open tournaments in 1964-1965 as well as the National Minority Golf Championships from 1987-1997.

Unlike many golf courses in the area, the park gave African Americans an opportunity to participate in an overwhelmingly white sport. Playing on this course became an activity passed down from generation to generation. The Sixth City Golf Club, established in 1946, and Forest City Golf Club were two pioneer leagues of African American golfers which played primarily at Highland. In the 1970s, the Golf Digest magazine ranked Highland's North Course the number one affordable, public course in the nation. During the winter, the course also allowed for sledding, cross country skiing and even dog sledding for Greater Cleveland residents.

In the 1930s and 40s, Highland Park Golf Course hosted the Ohio Golf Tournament. During the Cleveland Open in 1964 and 1965, the course saw greats like Palmer, Nicklaus and Tony Lema who won the tournament in 1964, capping a brilliant four-week winning stretch. The 1965 event was the first pro tournament to offer a \$100,000 purse, setting a higher standard for PGA championships. Highland was the "winter home" of the PGA and the association's first owned and operated public golf facility. Most aren't aware that Cleveland native, Bob Hope first played golf on the Highland greens.

However, the course was even better known for hosting the PGA National Minority Golf championship for a decade. The founders' goal was to elevate the game at minority colleges and universities by providing

student-athletes with the opportunity to compete on a championship stage during an era when they were excluded from playing in many collegiate golf events.

After the Minority Golf championship moved to Florida in 1997, Highland launched a Cleveland Minority Scholarship tournament. These tournaments allowed for collegiate and amateur golfers to play as well as a celebrity minority golf team. The opportunity to play golf at minority colleges was often rare and so players would come from all across the country to compete. The program also included funding and scholarships for minority colleges to create golf teams in an effort to diversify the sport. These tournaments often received national attention on USA Today and Sports Illustrated.

The most famous African American player to play the course was Charles Sifford, known as the “Jackie Robinson” of golf. He even called Highland his home course for a time. Sifford was the first African American to attempt to qualify for a PGA Tour and win in 1975 and the first African American to be inducted into the World Golf Hall of Fame. Just three months before Sifford’s death, President Obama awarded him the Presidential Medal of Freedom at the White House for his bravery and perseverance in fighting for racial justice. Tiger Woods acknowledged that Sifford paved the way for his career and so many other minority golfers.

Highland Park Golf course maintained its popularity into the 1990s and 2000s. When Highland Hills attempted to cut out nine holes of the course to expand a nearby cemetery, the City of Cleveland protected the historic course. Mayor Michael R. White hosted annual golf tournaments during the 1990s for the region to raise funds for the homeless and just in 2016, a project to restore a degraded and channelized section of Mill Creek was focused on the course.

Digital sources:

[Cleveland’s Highland Park Golf Course rebounds under city management, moves toward breaking even - cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com)

[Case Study: Helping Highland Park Golf Course \(dte.golf\)](http://dte.golf)

[Cost of subsidizing Highland Park Golf Course tees up feisty debate for Cleveland City Council - cleveland.com](http://cleveland.com)

<https://westcreek.org/project/highland-park-golf-course/>

<http://www.golfohio.com/departments/features/cleveland-golf-history-568.htm>

http://www.myblackhistory.net/Charlie_Sifford.htm

Exhibit 7



Exhibit 8

